



Hospital Initiated Buprenorphine Program Discharge Instructions

About Buprenorphine

You have been prescribed buprenorphine while in the hospital/emergency department. Buprenorphine is used to treat the symptoms of opiate withdrawal in order to facilitate treatment of opiate use disorder. This medication acts on opiate receptors. The medication should be placed under your tongue where it will dissolve and be absorbed directly into your blood stream. If you swallow the medication it will not work as well.

You should not take any opiates or sedatives (including those prescribed by a doctor) while taking Buprenorphine. If you drink alcohol or use benzodiazepines, talk to your provider. Taking buprenorphine with alcohol or benzodiazepines may put you at an increased risk for overdose.

You are being prescribed a 4mg dose of buprenorphine twice daily for a few days until you can be seen at the clinic. If deemed appropriate, the clinic will refill your buprenorphine prescribe at the same, a higher or a lower dose.

First Dose in the Hospital

If you received a first dose of Buprenorphine in the hospital/emergency department, you should take you next dose 12 hour later, and then continue to take one dose every 12 hours.

First Dose at Home:

If you were not given a dose in the hospital/emergency department, it probably means you were not yet having enough withdrawal symptoms. If you take buprenorphine before you are in moderate withdrawal, the medication can cause withdrawal symptoms, and make you feel really bad. You should wait until you have at least 3 of the following symptoms before taking your first dose:

- Feeling Sick
- Stomach Cramps
- Spontaneous Twitching
- Feelings of Coldness
- Heart Pounding
- Muscular Tension
- Aches and pains
- Yawning
- Runny Eyes
- Insomnia

Once you have taken your first dose at home, you should take you next dose 12 hours later, and then continue to take one dose every 12 hours.

You will receive your clinic appointment information via email/in hospital before discharge

Your Clinic Appointment

You have either been given an appointment slot at a particular clinic, or information on how to obtain one. The clinic will call you in the next 1-2 days to arrange your specific appointment time. Once you are given an appointment, a time slot will be held specially for you. If for any reason you cannot make that appointment, please call the clinic as soon as possible. Some clinics have a 2-step prescribing process, so you may not necessarily be given a new script for buprenorphine at your first appointment. Buprenorphine is one component of substance abuse disorder treatment. You may be expected to attend frequent counseling sessions based on the policies of the clinic.